

One hundred and eighty-five years ago, the people of Greece began a journey that would mark the symbolic birth of democracy in a land where those principles to human dignity were first espoused. This past Saturday, March 25, marked the 185th anniversary of the Greek struggle for independence. It was an historic day for all people who treasure freedom.

In 1821, after four centuries of Ottoman rule, Greeks rose up in arms, fought valiantly and finally achieved a dream centuries old, freedom from Turkish oppression. In setting their blood for liberty and winning their freedom, Greeks showed the world their deep and abiding commitment to democracy. This celebration also marks the beginning of one of America's most valued and rewarding friendships.

The flag of revolt was blessed by Bishop Germanos of Paleion Patron at the monastery of Aghia Lavra, and for 7 years, a handful of rebels in fierce fighting were able to contain the combined forces of the Sultan's Ottoman Empire. The confrontations at Valtetis, Dervenai, as well as Missologni, where Lord Byron fought and died, rank among the most glorious and important pages of Greek history.

□ 1915

The exploits and victories of the Greek navy under Miaoulis, Kanaris, and Sachtouris, inspired the people of Europe, who finally brought pressure upon their governments to intervene in the fighting and compel the Sultan to recognize Greek independence.

On October 20, 1827, at the battle of Navarino, the Turkish fleet was finally defeated by the British, French and Russian navies which had joined in the effort, and by September 14, after many centuries of foreign rule, freedom for the Greeks was regained by the Treaty of Adrianople of 1829 and, later, by the London Protocol of 1830.

I commemorate Greek Independence Day, Mr. Speaker, each year for the same reasons we celebrate our Fourth of July. It proved that a united people, through sheer will and perseverance, can prevail against tyranny. Both our nations share an illustrious history in defense of this cherished ideal. Both countries have shared a common commitment to the principles of equality and freedom, and in many ways, the American experiment might not have been possible without the Greek experience. Indeed, as Thomas Jefferson noted, "To the ancient Greeks we are all indebted for the light which led ourselves, American colonists, out of Gothic darkness."

The ancient Greeks created the very notion of democracy, in which the ultimate power to govern was vested in the people. As Aristotle said, "If liberty and equality, as is thought by some, are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost."

It was this concept, Mr. Speaker, that the Founding Fathers of the United States of America drew heavily upon in forming our representative government.

Constitutionally, democracy has made the American way of life possible. For that contribution alone, we owe a heavy debt to the Greek people, but the contribution of democracy was not the only contribution made by Greek patriots to American society.

The ancient Greeks contributed a great deal both to our cultural heritage, as well as to European culture, in the areas of art, philosophy, science and law. In the preface to his poem "Hellas," poet Percy Shelly wrote, "Our laws, our literature, our religion, our arts have their roots in Greece."

Greece has also given another gift to America. Nearly 1 million Greeks came to America's shores and enriched this great country of ours. Greek Americans have followed the rich tradition of their ancestors. They have made their mark in many professions, including medicine, science, law and business, among others. Some of our most illustrious citizens claim Greek ancestry. The welfare and progress of the Greek community, both here and abroad, is of great importance to all of us.

Greek independence was a model for our new Nation and continues to be an inspiration for all those living in the darkness of oppression. Throughout history, Greece has represented an ideal in man's search for liberty. The principles of Greek democracy represent the greatest contribution a nation has ever made to society.

The democratic tradition that began in Greece and continues in the American experience is taking root in an increasing number of countries, and the implications for world peace, while still very uncertain, are nevertheless the most promising they have been in decades. Democracy and freedom are the guiding beliefs that give hope to millions around the world and fuel the democratic revolution that is today sweeping the planet.

Mr. Speaker, remembering the sacrifice of the brave Greeks who gave their lives for liberty helps us all realize how important it is to be an active participant in our own democracy, and that is why we honor those who secured independence for Greece so many years ago.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

U.S. IN IRAQ UNTIL 2009

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, for a President whose party controls both Houses of Congress, the Supreme Court and, of course, the White House bully pulpit itself, George W. Bush has certainly had an awful lot of explaining to do lately.

With all the power at his disposal, starting with a knee-jerk legislature all too ready to follow his lead, lock, stock and barrel, the President should not have to constantly redefine his mission and America's. That is exactly what he has done and what he is doing.

Before the war, he offered only a strained rationale as to why we needed to attack Iraq. First, it was getting rid of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. Then the rationale was deposing a dictator who provided refuge to al Qaeda, and finally, it became spreading liberty throughout the Middle East.

Once things started to turn south, President Bush redefined what he meant when he declared "an end to major combat operations" only a year into the war. Now he is redefining what it means to be in a civil war.

Mr. Speaker, let us be perfectly clear. Iraq is not in danger of falling into a civil war. The country is in the very throes of a civil war conflict as we speak. Some people have this false notion that an Iraqi civil war would resemble two sides fighting and fighting it out with antiquated rifles in a field that looks kind of like Gettysburg.

Unfortunately, the sectarian violence that currently plagues Iraq is pretty similar in appearance and scope to the Lebanese civil war fought in the 1970s and 1980s. Then, like now, religion was manipulated to encourage fighting among different sects. Alliances shift rapidly so that no one ever really knows who is on their side and who is not; and worst of all, innocents are killed on a nearly daily basis as a result of the infighting.

As if the failure to acknowledge what is really happening in Iraq was not bad enough, only a week ago, the President attempted his most strained leap of logic yet. During a press conference, which, by the way, after 6 years in office he is finally conducting with regularity, the President stated that American military forces would remain in Iraq until 2009, at the earliest, that another President would have to end it.

After initially implying that the war would not cost much and would not take long to fight, the President needs to explain to the American people why the decision to bring our troops home from Iraq will, as he says, "be decided by future Presidents."

Mr. Speaker, given the current instability in Iraq, which 150,000 brave U.S. troops who have not been able to quell after more than 3 years of war, why in the world would we plan on American forces remaining in Iraq until 2009? It

seems like the President is trying, yet again, to redefine the mission to his satisfaction.

Well, you cannot redefine the facts, Mr. Speaker. There is no way to paper over the hundreds of Iraqi civilians who are being brutally murdered in sectarian violence. There is no way to disguise the nearly 2,500 American troops who have lost their lives in this war or the over 15,000 who have been forever injured.

Yet, none of these tragic losses have made either the United States or Iraq safer from the threat of terrorism. The tragic irony is that the war has actually made Iraq a haven for international terrorism.

It is time for the President to stop trying to redefine reality. It is time to define something constructive for the American people. It is time we plan how we will bring our troops home.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DREIER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING BUCK, MAN'S BEST FRIEND AND WAR DOG AMBASSADOR.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I might speak at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in sadness to note the recent passing of Buck, a beloved Siberian Husky who has brought awareness to the courage and loyalty of our Nation's heroic K-9 soldiers, the military working dogs. At the age of 15, Buck passed away at home in Lexington, South Carolina, on March 23, 2006.

Buck was the companion to Vietnam Scout Dog Handler Johnny Mayo, who served with the 39th Scout Dog Platoon, 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vietnam as a scout dog handler.

While traveling in my district last July, I had the opportunity to meet Johnny Mayo and his dog Buck. After having the pleasure of spending a few minutes petting Buck, I can honestly say that Buck was a sweet dog who will be missed dearly by those who knew him.

In Johnny Mayo's 2002 book titled, "Buck's Heroes: A Dog's Tale of Vietnam War Dogs," Buck accompanies his master to a reunion of former handlers and their families at the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C. While gazing at the black granite memorial at

his master's side, Buck begins hearing and seeing the ghosts of the dogs who participated in the Vietnam War. Among the scout dogs who speak to Buck are his master's war dogs Tiger and Kelly. The dogs tell Buck what life was like for them and the soldiers they served and protected.

By serving as the narrator and storyteller in Johnny Mayo's book, Buck educated thousands of readers about the invaluable service of military working dogs.

Buck served as a companion and aid to his owner by traveling thousands of miles with him to various war dog events, including three Vietnam Dog Handler National Reunions in Washington, D.C., St. Louis and Phoenix, Arizona.

Continuing the legacy of military working dogs who served our Nation during World War I, World War II and the Korean War, the war dogs who served in the jungles of Vietnam used their keen senses of smell, hearing and sight to detect dangers that threatened American lives.

Of the 4,000 war dogs that served in Vietnam, only 204 survived. Historians believe these trained dogs prevented more than 10,000 American casualties during their deployment from 1965 to 1972.

As both war dogs and their handlers risked their lives in combat, their bond solidified and grew into a relationship of enduring love and shared loyalty to their mission.

With Buck at his side, Johnny Mayo has had the courage to share the story of the loyal service of his war dogs Tiger and Kelly and the bond that develops between K-9 soldiers and their handlers.

To honor the loyalty, courage and sacrifice made by the teams of war dogs and their handlers, I will soon introduce legislation to designate land for the construction of a National War Dog Team Memorial in Washington, D.C.

The National War Dog Team Memorial Fund and its supporters have already begun to raise money for the project and are not asking the taxpayers or Congress for a single penny. The legislation will merely designate a plot of land for the memorial's construction.

The proposed memorial will commemorate all U.S. armed services and all wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations where military working dogs have been used to support military ground operations since World War I.

As we join Johnny Mayo in mourning the loss of his Siberian Husky, Buck, let us seek to continue the legacy of educating American citizens about the history of our Nation's war dogs by commemorating the heroic service of K-9 soldiers and their handlers with a National War Dog Team Memorial.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I close by asking God to please bless our men and women in uniform and their families,

and I ask God to continue to please bless America.

PBS: ARMENIAN GENOCIDE DENIALIST FORUM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to express my extreme disappointment with the Public Broadcasting System's decision to give a forum to Armenian genocide denialists following the April 17 broadcast of Andrew Goldberg's documentary, "The Armenian Genocide."

PBS should be commended for deciding to run Goldberg's documentary. However, the documentary should stand on its own. I am troubled by the network's decision to conduct a panel discussion immediately after the documentary that focuses on Turkey's role in the death of Armenians during and after World War I.

The 25-minute panel discussion has generated an outcry because the panel will include two scholars who deny that 1.5 million Armenian civilians were killed in eastern Turkey from 1915 to 1923.

I urge PBS to reconsider the inclusion of the panel discussion. Despite the Turkish Government's continued concerted effort to deny and alter history, there is no serious academic historian willing to dispute the genocide, or extermination, of 1.5 million Armenians at the hands of the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923. There are literally thousands of pages of documents in our national archive confirming the Armenian genocide.

Prominent citizens of the day, including America's ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Henry Morgenthau, and Britain's Lord Bryce, reported on the massacres in great detail. Morgenthau was appalled at what he would later call the "sadistic orgies" of rape, torture and murder. Lord Bryce, a former British Ambassador to the United States, worked to raise awareness of and money for the victims of what he called "the most colossal crime in the history of the world."

□ 1930

In October 1915, the Rockefeller Foundation contributed \$30,000, a sum worth more than \$.5 million today, to a relief fund for Armenia.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that despite overwhelming documentation and eyewitness proof of the Armenian genocide, Mr. Goldberg's documentary includes denialist views to present a comprehensive perspective. This completely alleviates the need to include PBS's panel discussion. It is exceptionally inappropriate for PBS to include these two nonobjective scholars on the public airwaves so they can spread their political propaganda.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would note that I would not feel any different about